

the law, including the President of the United States. Everyone who was responsible for the insurrection that occurred on January 6 should be held accountable—from those who broke into the Capitol and caused the harm and damage to the President of the United States who incited the violence.

That is why I voted to convict President Trump of the Article of Impeachment for inciting an insurrection, and that is why I would have voted for disqualifying him from ever holding an office of trust again.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

IMPEACHMENT

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the hallmark of our American democracy is the peaceful transfer of power after the voters choose their leaders. In America, we accept election results even if our candidate does not prevail. If a candidate believes that there is fraud, the courts can hear and decide those issues. Otherwise, the authority to govern is vested in the duly elected officials.

On January 6, this Congress gathered in the Capitol to count the votes of the electoral college, pursuant to the process set forth in the 12th Amendment to the Constitution. At the same time, a mob stormed the Capitol, determined to stop Congress from carrying out our constitutional duty.

That attack was not a spontaneous outbreak of violence. Rather, it was the culmination of a steady stream of provocations by President Trump that were aimed at overturning the results of the Presidential election.

The President's unprecedented efforts to discredit the election results did not begin on January 6. Rather, he planted the seeds of doubt many weeks before votes were cast on November 3. He repeatedly told his supporters that only a rigged election could cause him to lose.

Thus began President Trump's crusade to undermine public confidence in the Presidential election unless he won.

Early in the morning of November 4, as the ballots continued to be counted, President Trump claimed victory and asserted that Democrats were trying to steal the election.

On November 8, the day after several media outlets had declared Joe Biden the apparent winner based on State-by-State results, President Trump tweeted:

This was a stolen election.

With that, his postelection campaign to change the outcome began.

Over the ensuing days and months, the President distorted the results of the election, continuing to claim that he had won, while court after court threw out his lawsuits and States continued to certify their results. President Trump's falsehoods convinced a

large number of Americans that he had won and that they were being cheated.

The President also embarked on an incredible effort to pressure State election officials to change the results in their States. The most egregious example occurred on January 2. In an extraordinary phone call, President Trump could be heard alternating between lobbying, cajoling, intimidating, and threatening the election officials in Georgia. "I just want to find 11,708 votes," he stated, seeking the exact number of votes needed to change the outcome in that State. Despite the President's pleas and threats, the Georgia officials refused to yield to the Presidential pressure, as did State officials in other States.

In December, President Trump's postelection campaign became focused on January 6, the day that Congress was scheduled to count the electoral college votes. Although this counting is a ceremonial and administrative act, it is nevertheless the constitutionally mandated final step in the electoral college and the electoral process, and it must occur before a new President can be inaugurated.

On December 19, President Trump tweeted to his supporters:

Big protest in D.C. on January 6th. Be there, will be wild!

In response, some of his campaign supporters changed the date for protest rallies they originally had scheduled to occur after the inauguration to happen instead on January 6.

Having failed to persuade the courts and State election officials, President Trump next began to pressure Vice President Pence to use his role under the 12th Amendment to overturn the election. The President met with Vice President Pence on January 5 and then increased the pressure by tweeting hours later:

If [the Vice President] comes through for us, we will win the Presidency.

That is what his tweet said.

Vice President Pence, however, refused to yield. He issued a public letter on January 6 making clear that his oath to support and defend the Constitution would prevent him from unilaterally deciding which electoral vote should be counted and which should not.

During his speech at the Ellipse on January 6, President Trump kept up that drumbeat of pressure on Vice President Pence. In front of a large, agitated crowd, he urged the Vice President to "stand up for the good of our Constitution." "I hope Mike has the courage to do what he has to do," President Trump concluded. Rather than facilitating the peaceful transfer of power, President Trump was telling Vice President Pence to ignore the Constitution and to refuse to count the certified votes. He was also further agitating the crowd, directing them to march to the Capitol.

In this situation, context was everything. Tossing a lit match into a pile of dry leaves is very different from toss-

ing it into a pool of water. And on January 6, the atmosphere among the crowd outside the White House was highly combustible, largely the result of an ill wind blowing from Washington for the past 2 months.

President Trump had stoked discontent with a steady barrage of false claims that the election had been stolen from him. The allegedly responsible officials were denigrated, scorned, and ridiculed by the President, with the predictable result that his supporters viewed any official they perceived to be an obstacle to President Trump's reelection as an enemy of their cause. That set the stage for the storming of the Capitol for the first time in more than 200 years.

Nearly 30 minutes after the Capitol first came under attack, Members of Congress, law enforcement, and everyone else here in the Capitol waited in vein for the President to unequivocally condemn the violence and tell his misguided supporters to leave the Capitol. Rather than demand an end to the violence, President Trump expressed his frustration once again that the Vice President had not stopped the vote certification as he had urged.

Shortly after the Vice President was whisked away from this very Chamber to avoid the menacing mob chanting "Hang Mike Pence," President Trump tweeted:

Mike Pence didn't have the courage to do what should have been done.

Instead of preventing a dangerous situation, President Trump created one.

Rather than defend the constitutional transfer of power, he incited an insurrection with the purpose of preventing that transfer of power from occurring.

Whether by design or by virtue of a reckless disregard for the consequences of his action, President Trump, subordinating the interests of the country to his own selfish interest, bears significant responsibility for the invasion of the Capitol.

This impeachment trial is not about any single word uttered by President Trump on January 6, 2021; it is instead about President Trump's failure to obey the oath he swore on January 20, 2017. His actions to interfere with the peaceful transition of power, the hallmark of our Constitution and our American democracy, were an abuse of power and constitute grounds for conviction.

Two arguments have been made against conviction that deserve comment. The first is that this was a snap impeachment, that the House failed to hold hearings, conduct an investigation, and to interview witnesses, and that is true. Without a doubt, the House should have been more thorough. It should have compiled a more complete record. Nevertheless, the record is clear that the President, President Trump, abused his power, violated his oath to uphold the Constitution, and tried almost every

means in his power to prevent the peaceful transfer of authority to the newly elected President.

Second is the contention that the First Amendment protects the President's right to make any sort of outrageous and false claims, no matter the consequences.

(Ms. BALDWIN assumed the Chair.)

But the First Amendment was not designed and must never be construed by any court to bar the impeachment and conviction of an official who violates his oath of office by summoning and inciting a mob to threaten other officials in the discharge of their constitutional obligations.

My vote in this trial stems from my own oath and duty to defend the Constitution of the United States. The abuse of power and betrayal of his oath by President Trump meet the constitutional standard of high crimes and misdemeanors, and for those reasons, I voted to convict Donald J. Trump.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—PRINTING OF STATEMENTS IN THE RECORD AND PRINTING OF SENATE DOCUMENT OF IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Secretary be authorized to include statements of Senators explaining their votes, either given or submitted during the legislative sessions of the Senate through March 1, along with the full record of the Senate's proceedings and the filings by the parties in a Senate document printed under the supervision of the Secretary of the Senate that will complete the documentation of the Senate's handling of these impeachment proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING THE LIFE, ACHIEVEMENTS, AND LEGACY OF THE HONORABLE GEORGE PRATT SHULTZ

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 61, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 61) honoring the life, achievements, and legacy of the Honorable George Pratt Shultz.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 61) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

CONGRATULATING THE TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS, AND THE LOYAL FANS OF THE TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS, FOR BECOMING SUPER BOWL LV CHAMPIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 62, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 62) congratulating the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, and the loyal fans of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, for becoming Super Bowl LV champions.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 62) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President pro tempore and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, pursuant to Public Law 116-283, on behalf of the Republican Leader of the Senate and the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, appoints the following individual

as a member of the Commission on the Naming of Items of the Department of Defense that Commemorate the Confederate States of America or Any Person Who Served Voluntarily with the Confederate States of America: Mr. Jerry Buchanan of Oklahoma.

REPORTING AUTHORITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that on Friday, February 19, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., committees be authorized to report legislative and executive matters.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that at a time determined on Tuesday, February 23, notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate proceed to executive session and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Thomas J. Vilsack to be Secretary of Agriculture; further, that there be 20 minutes for debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees and that the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 10.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Linda Thomas-Greenfield, of Louisiana, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented